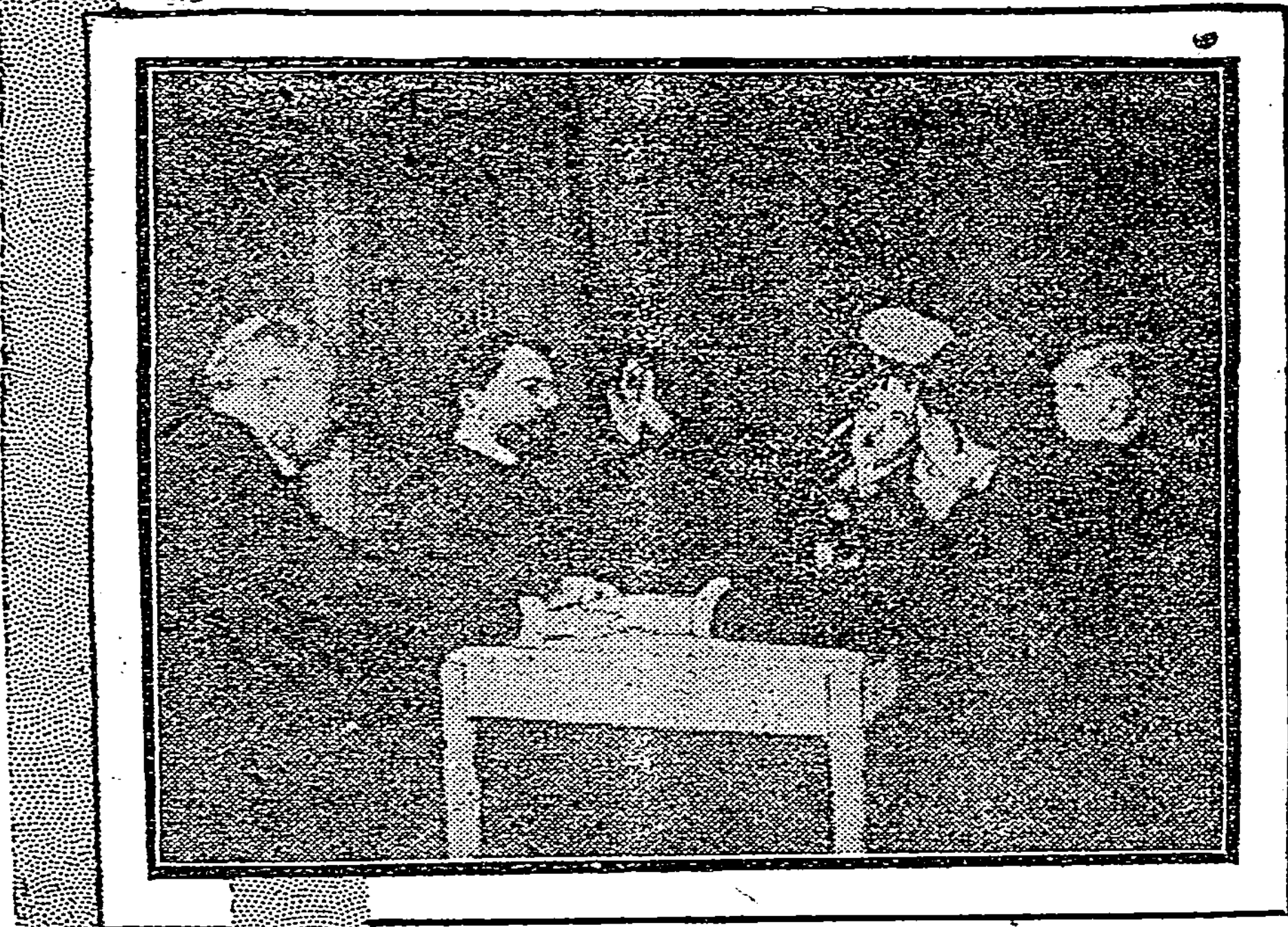
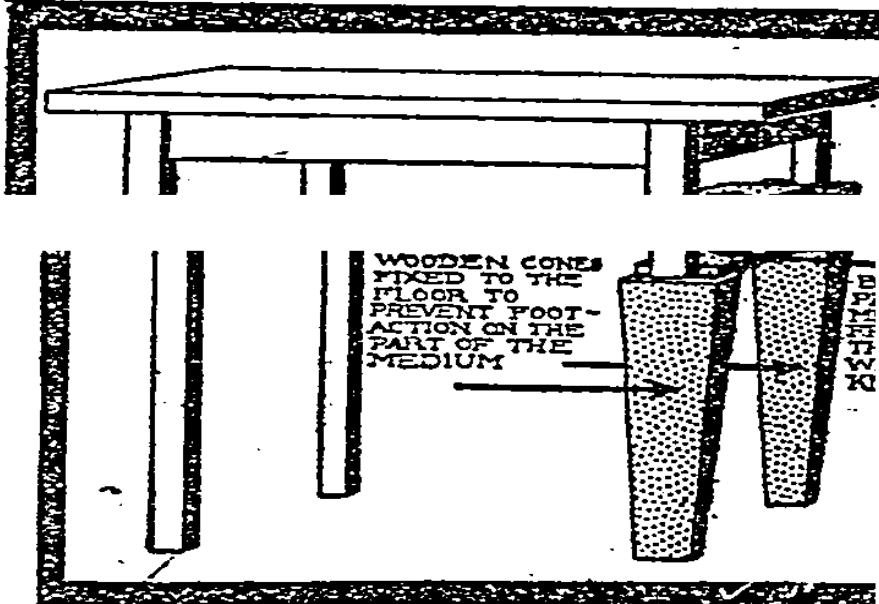


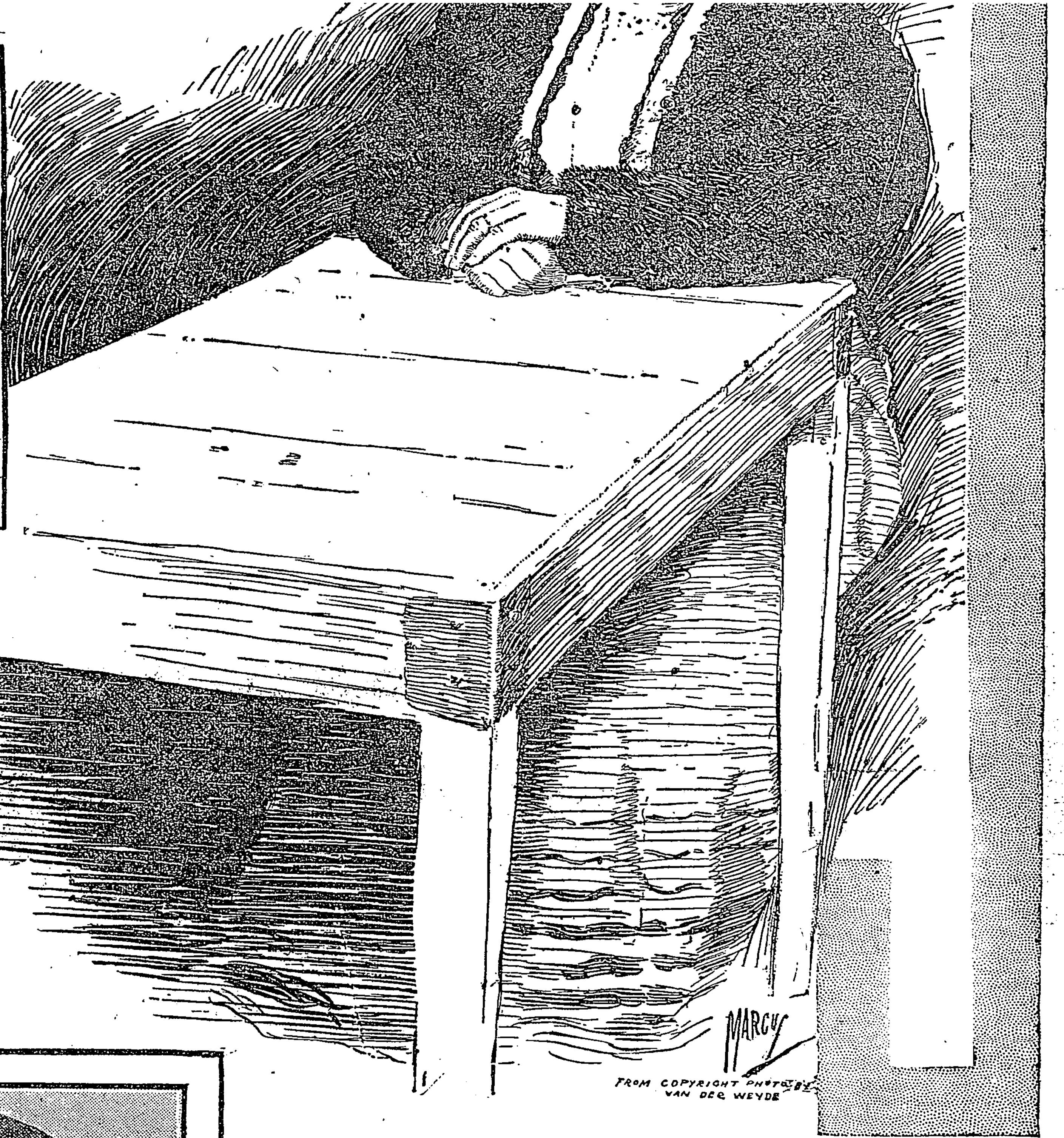
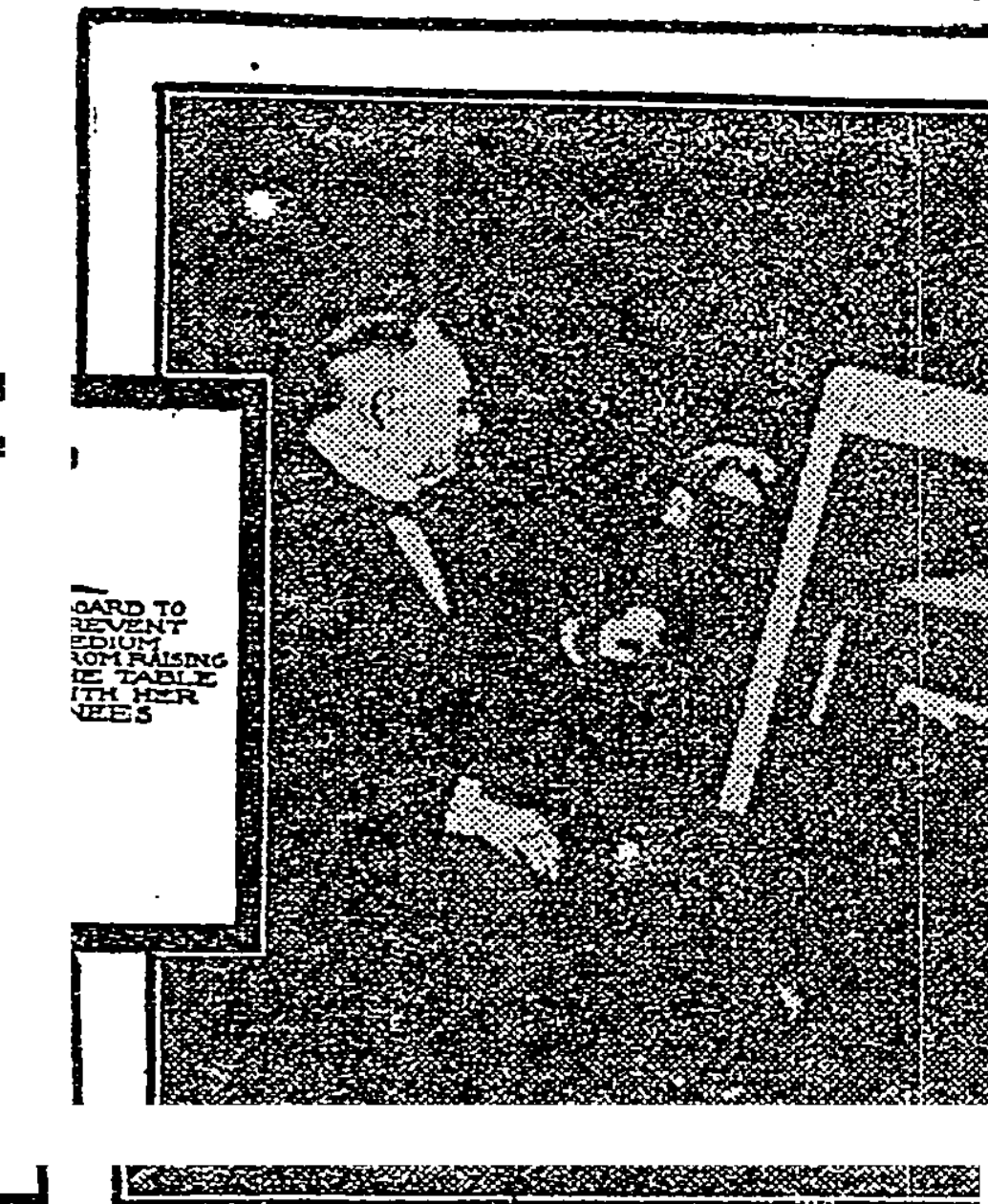
SIDELIGHTS ON THE PALADINO DELUSION.



This Picture and That on the Right Are from Photographs of Mme. Paladino's Table-Tipping Performance in Europe.



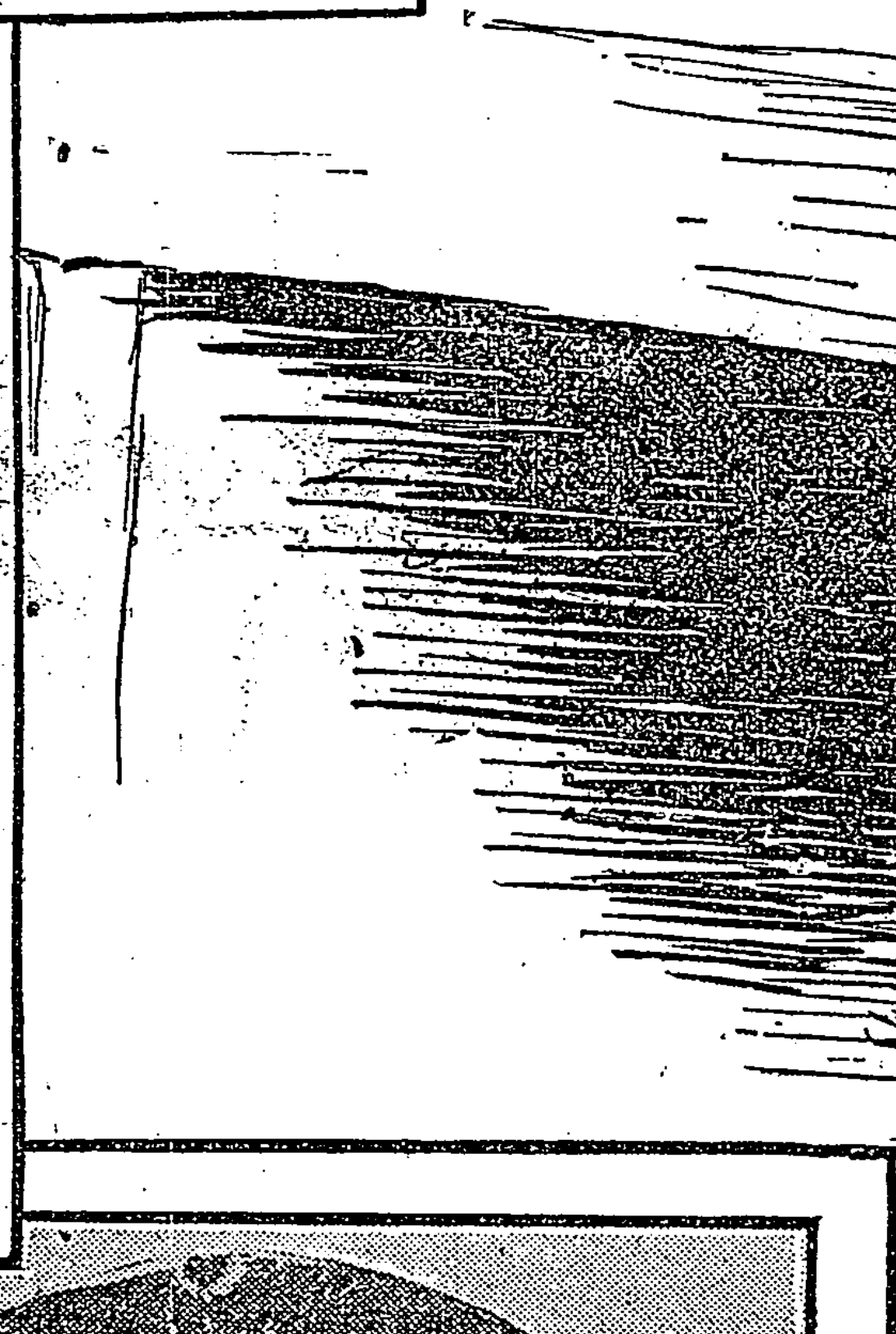
A Device Recently Used to Interfere with Possible Fraud.



Eusapia Paladino.



Relative Positions of Medium and her "Guests." Mr. Davis Suggests That a Thin Wire from the Waist of the Medium to the Table Might Account for the Moving of the Latter.



Impression of a Human Face Formed in a Bowl of Clay by Mme. Paladino During a Seance.



Hereward Carrington.

A Challenge to the Medium to Undergo Real Tests Instead of Bogus Ones--Ways in Which She Has Been Shown Up in the Past

By W. S. Davis,
Secretary of the Metropolitan Psychical Society.

MME. PALADINO is a woman of exceptional courage. When we stop to think that she dared to cross the ocean, go into a hostile country, and give her first seance to a party of newspaper men, who would not only try to expose her but who would also spread the embarrassing news to the uttermost parts of the earth, she did a thing that no other physical medium ever dared to do.

The average man or woman always has a certain amount of admiration for an expert in any branch of human industry, be it honorable or otherwise, and I have even known some persons to go so far in this matter as to doff their hats to expert poker sharps and three-card monte men; not because they approved of their vocations, but because of the unusual skill they possessed. If Mme. Paladino succeeds in filling all of her engagements in this country without being arrested for obtaining money under false pretenses I myself shall go to the steamboat pier on the day of her departure and hand her a bouquet.

When it was originally announced that she would come to this country and meet scientists, it seemed to me that she intended to pick up some "easy money," and had selected the easiest of "easy marks" for her victims, but when she commenced with sagacious and suspicious journalists—men of the world—and then announced that she would take prestidigitateurs next, I felt that we ought to proclaim her the champion sorceress of the age. But if the prestidigitateurs are baffled as easily and thoroughly as some of the newspaper men were, what shall we say? Shall we conclude that she is a genuine medium? No! A thousand times no! She may baffle and hoodwink every man and woman on the face of the earth without possessing one iota of genuine occult power. No one knows just how skillful she is, and her resources may be equal to any strain put upon them.

I am aware that this business of underestimating the capacity of another person has more than once made trouble for the underestimator. That Mme. Paladino is perfectly capable of giving a unique exhibition, when she is permitted to proceed in her own way, is unquestionably true, but Lulu Hurst, Annie Abbott, the Davenport brothers, Washington Irving Bishop, J. Randall Brown, James Louis Kellogg, and even May Pepper, all did the same thing—for a while. It must be borne in mind that Mme. Paladino has practically been an exclusive medium, who could not be reached by the general public, and I say without hesitation that had she opened her seance room doors to every skeptical person, just as many of her predecessors have done, that it is quite probable that she would have been thoroughly trapped long before now.

First-class pseudo-mediums cannot easily be exposed by restricted investigators, who are not permitted to move out of their seats without the permission of the medium. To be a good exposé of professional charlatans, one must actually degrade himself by also playing false, and such work cannot often be done in any other way. We must make false representations; we must pretend to be friendly and sympathetic with the medium when we are really planning her downfall; and we must frequently resort to violence. Investigators who are incapable of or unwilling to adopt such measures might just as well keep away from seances. Mediums are tricky; Mme. Paladino is tricky, and it not only needs a trickster to catch her, but it needs one who will not hesitate to do so.

Eusapia Paladino should be subjected to "the acid test" by an investigator who knows how to apply the "acid," and any man or woman who, through mercenary or other motives, might be tempted to act as a confederate should be kept without the seance room. I have no thought whatever of insinuating that those who are exploiting Mme. Paladino would stoop to any infamy, and it may be just a little injudicious to even suggest such a thing, but the fact remains, however,

that such a thing would easily be possible, and all possibilities should be taken into account if we are really seeking the truth.

It must be remembered that in an investigation she has the investigators at a disadvantage, for the reason that she knows how she is doing her work and the investigators have to guess at it. All they can do is to compel her to demonstrate that their guess is not a correct one.

We have to deduce a theory from the facts before us, and by taking a vast amount of testimony and making a sort of composite statement we find one witness contradicting another until we are finally able to eliminate exaggeration and misdescription arising out of inaccurate observation.

Dr. Hodgson's exposure of her came about in the following way. He and I had figured out her probable methods as they were described by me in an article in THE SUNDAY TIMES on Oct. 17 last. When he went to England and attended one of her seances there he placed upon her head a little cap coated with luminous paint.

She did not know that the cap was coated, or that it would be a telltale, and proceeded with her performance in entire ignorance and confidence of safety. The illuminated cap enabled the spectators to watch and observe all the movements of her head. As it would have been impossible for her to have moved her head as she did without also moving her body they were thereby able to know just where she was during every phenomenon.

With both hands securely held it would have been impossible for her to have moved in either direction more than twenty degrees. But with one hand free, and by getting out of her chair, she could easily sweep a circle of ninety degrees or more, thus producing phenomena beyond what would have been regarded as her legitimate range of reach.

Dr. Hodgson also discovered that a thumb which should have belonged to her left hand was the thumb of the right hand, thus indicating that the hand supposed to have been in contact with him had been removed and that another hand had been substituted. When this discovery had been made and proved it at once explained a very large part of what such men as Sir Oliver Lodge, Mr. Meyers, and numerous others had previously supposed were genuine phenomena.

Dr. Hodgson also demonstrated that the assumption that they were controlling Eusapia's feet was based entirely upon illusion. She does not permit spectators to cover her feet, especially the insteps, with their feet. At some seances she removes her shoes, which enables her to use a stockinged foot with considerable dexterity. We have seen women in dime museums take off their shoes and do crocheting and even write letters with their toes. Probably if some of these distinguished scientists were to obtain crocheting and writing while they were holding the hands of some dime museum freak they might also assume in such cases that the museum freak did her work under the agency of spirits.

Dr. Hodgson discovered that there was no time during the seances he attended when she did not have the use of either a hand or a foot, and nothing more was needed.

His exposure was conceded to be absolutely accurate by all who participated in those seances, and even to-day nobody questions the truth of his report.

It is not possible for Mme. Paladino to perform her feats of levitation without contact between herself and the table. In the very first report made upon her by scientists—that made on the investigation conducted in Milan in 1891—all the members of the party who were experienced observers stated emphatically that every time the table levitated off the floor her dress was in contact with it. When they insisted that she should stand back so that contact with the table was impossible there was no levitation.

When Dr. Hodgson arrived in England to make the investigation which resulted in his exposure of Paladino he found that it was unnecessary to investigate her table-tipping feat for the reason that among the English it had already been thoroughly exploded. The English had repudiated it for the reason I have just given—that she was always in contact with the table when it levitated, and also that she would not permit any obstruction to be placed between it and herself.

I have said that when an attempt has been made to place a screen between her and the table she has protested. There is always a sort of rhythm between the motions of her body and the movement of the table. If she slips back an inch, the table goes back an inch. If she lifts herself a little, the

table levitates proportionately. This correspondence between the movements of her body and those of the table indicates that there is a definite fixture there.

At the conclusion of the levitation the table drops, usually suddenly, as though a string had been cut, allowing it to fall. Now, it may be that the levitation is caused by a string, and that the string eventually breaks it. Or it may be that the tension is taken off a clamp, thereby allowing it to fall suddenly.

Strangely enough, with every levitation of the table there is a corresponding indication on the face of Eusapia that she is undergoing exactly the necessary physical strain to produce the motion. When the levitation is excessive and she is struggling hard, she perspires and shows exhaustion. If the movement of the table is very slight, her fatigue is equally slight.

Now, nobody, whether he be a professional conjurer or not, can undertake to say what it is that the woman has concealed in her skirt. The fact that she cannot lift the table unless her dress is in contact with it and there is no obstruction between herself and it is sufficient. That there is something there that causes the dress to protrude and evidently clamps the ledge or the lid of the table, and that she will not permit any interference with that apparent clamping, is as far as we can go.

The conditions may be compared to

her "spirit guide" for the production of the phenomena. And persons who have attended her seances believe that "magnetism" or electricity is utilized in some of the feats. Very well, then, why not have galvanometers and other instruments at these American seances and see just how much "magnetism" does enter into the question?

The matter of color also must be considered, for black facilitates chicanery, and with black curtains, black clothing, and dim lights, there is no telling what the medium might do.

It seems to me that any person with common sense must regard the cabinet with suspicion. Nobody knows what is going on inside of it, and although the spectators may be sitting in an abundance of light, and even boast of that fact, yet the room might just as well be totally dark, so far as knowing what is transpiring in the cabinet is concerned. One of the spectators should stand upon a chair close to the cabinet and drop a wire with an incandescent lamp attached to it inside of the cabinet. Then, when phenomena are occurring, the button should be pressed for instant light, and it would be pretty well known then just what was going on in the mysterious inclosure.

Would Eusapia agree to such methods of investigation, particularly if they were conducted by professional conjurers?

I certainly do not know whether she would or not, but I am disposed to think that she would not. She has a habit of refusing any test that is calculated to trouble her, and goes into a rage if you press the matter.

On Friday I made this proposition in writing to Prof. Hyslop:

"Can you manage to help me put through a little test? I propose that a frame shall be made of thin, light wood, about four feet square, with mosquito netting stretched over it. This frame is to be placed between Eusapia and the table which she proposes to levitate.

"The mosquito netting cannot obstruct the passage of the 'psychic fluid,' because the 'fluid' must pass through her clothes now, according to her nonsense, and one more thin cloth ought not to make any difference. But if it does, she can remove a petticoat or something else, so as not to have too much between herself and the table. Can you put this test through for me, or, if not, can you get some one else to do it?"

If she withstands this test and the

table is levitated without puncturing the netting, and if the experiment takes place in a fairly good light, in the presence of good observers who are very positive that she has not reached around the screen, then we shall be at our wits' end to devise a more effective safeguard against the method employed by her.

If, on the other hand, she refuses so simple a test as this, there can only be one logical conclusion. That is, she is afraid of exposure.

When Eusapia commences with the table-tipping performance the lights are comparatively good, and the spectators notice that fact. Usually they all place their hands lightly upon the table. Sometimes Eusapia rests her hands upon those nearest to her.

Presently her face becomes contorted and her arms go up in the air, and with clinched fists she goes through a number of grotesque movements of the arms. Then there is a tremor of the table. She may have, linked on and hanging from her elbows, thin thread loops, which would be invisible. During her wild gesticulations these loops may dangle about the corners of the table until, catching the corner, they produce the tremor.

But with the threads she cannot produce anything more than this tremor, which is just enough to fill the minds of the people present with the idea that she actually possesses some occult power. When they have once become possessed of that belief, then they are prepared to accept almost anything that may follow. The impression is created within their minds that everything is in readiness and phenomena are about to occur.

In this state of mind they cease to think about the lights. She demands less light, and as the lights are lowered the volume of the phenomena is increased. It is by the clinching of her fists and the working of the arms and elbows in her frantic gesticulations that one or the other of the loops has caught beneath the corner of the table. But now, after the preliminary budging of the table, the clamp and the wire loop are resorted to. It is usually not noticed that good conditions and bright lights have not prevailed during the whole affair, and the preliminary budging of the table, which occurred under good conditions, is often confused in the minds of the spectators with the

(Continued on the Following Page.)

SIDELIGHTS ON THE PALADINO DELUSION

(Continued from Preceding Page.)

violent levitation which in reality took place after the lights were lowered.

If it should be particularly dangerous to attempt to catch the corners of the table, she could very easily dangle a strong cord or thread from her bosom or neck down to the lower edge of the table, to which is fastened a small hook, and then, with these body movements that she exhibits so freely, she could catch the table under the edge nearest to her, and thereby produce the preliminary motions.

I have in my possession now a journal of the English Society for Psychical Research, printed about sixteen years ago, in which it is stated that she had a tantrum just because a good skeptic wanted to place a cardboard screen between a part of her body and the article of furniture that she proposed to move. And Eusapia would not allow the test.

Why?

It has hitherto been claimed by the better class of spiritists that phenomena cannot be obtained at will, and that they cannot be obtained in the presence of skeptics at all, but we are now given to understand that the phenomena are to be turned on about as fast as the \$250 for each seance can be counted out, and that Eusapia may even "go on the road" and do "two shows" daily. Let us hope, however, that things are not quite so bad as that.

If the various reports of the first American seances are approximately accurate, it is very plain that Mr. Carrington is employing "suggestion" for all it is worth in influencing the minds of the spectators, for he usually saw things first, and, after stating what he had seen, some of the others also fancied that they, too, saw them. You will remember that Mr. Carrington was formerly an amateur conjuror, and he understands the value of "patter."

Candidly, I should think that two such skillful performers as both Mr. Carrington and Mme. Paladino are might give a really enjoyable entertainment if they accept the alleged liberal offer of William E. Brady, the theatrical man, and if they join forces I have no doubt the venture will be a financial success.

Mme. Paladino is invariably spoken of as an "ignorant" woman, while her clients are usually referred to as being profoundly educated. This is to create the idea that she would be incapable of deceiving her patrons. But this is an error that should be rectified. Mme. Paladino is not ignorant, and her patrons are not educated—so far as spiritistic trickery is concerned. She may not know much about geology, physiology, or astronomy, but she has had at least thirty years of experience in spiritistic chicanery and is profoundly educated in that special branch of knowledge; and that is more than we can say for any of the men who are charging her with ignorance.

In a letter from Prof. William James of Harvard University he tells me that everybody admits that Eusapia resorts to fraud at times, and then asks if fraud will explain all of her phenomena. If we are to answer his question, it seems to me that the amount of fraud can only be determined by the person having the greatest knowledge of fraud. Whom does Prof. James suppose has the greater knowledge of fraud, the scientist or the detective and trickster? I wish that I could induce college professors to abandon investigations of spiritism until "scientists" in chicanery have first given them up in "despair." Joseph F. Rinn, when discussing the performance of a woman who pretended to play a piano while in a hypnotic trance and blindfolded, made a statement that eclipses anything that any so-called "scientific" investigator

Exposed in Europe She Is Challenged To Meet Tests Here Which Will Make Frauds Impossible--Will She Accept?

has ever said, and it is this: "Extraordinary phenomena require extraordinary proof." Ordinary testimony may be entirely acceptable in a trolley car accident case, but when we are asked to believe that a woman who has been exposed so often as Eusapia has possesses the power to perform inexplicable marvels, we not only need the evidence of experts, but we need an abundance of it.

If it could be said that Mme. Paladino is the "despair" of detectives and professional conjurors, then I could readily understand why credulous persons should accept her as a genuine miracle worker, but when she has never in her life done anything more than befog a lot of elderly, and sometimes senile, professional men with the idea that she is a genuine spirit medium, I cannot possibly see why there should be so much excitement over her. I, of course, understand that younger men have not been able to explain all of her feats, but most of them did not assume on that account that the feats could not be rationally explained. I am not objecting to miracles; I am objecting to a belief in miracles based upon the wretched evidence now before us.

Among the younger men who have not been able to explain the Paladino mysteries Hereward Carrington is probably the one who should have been most capable of doing so, especially when he had nearly a dozen seances where he could have studied the matter.

Now as to whether mercenary interests or inherent credulity influenced his judgment it matters very little one way or another, for we can easily deduce from the evidence before us that his investigations were very, very far from being thorough.

Let us examine his own report and see how ridiculously futile his efforts were, and how easy it would have been for Eusapia to have deceived him. And we will take for our illustration the celebrated table-tipping feat.

Apprehending that motion might be given to the table by a pressure of the medium's feet, knees, or body against the table, he went to a carpenter and had made a pair of wooden cones connected with a board. Next he placed the two front legs of the table inside of these cones, reminding us of a horse with a pair of trousers on his forelegs, as shown in the accompanying illustration. Mr. Carrington, his associate, Mr. Fielding, and Mme. Paladino to positions at the table as shown in the illustration underneath the one first referred to. Eusapia was seated at the narrow end with her knees between the cones, while the two men sat at the broad sides of the table. According to the report, all of the hands were sometimes resting upon the table separately, then in contact by some sort of touch, and occasionally Eusapia held the hands of the men. In order to still further guard against fraud the conditions were frequently varied and both men pressed their feet

against those of the medium, held her knees, squatted upon the floor so as to get a better view of the lower part of her body, and did various other things which remind us of the report of a wrestling match. And then, under such stringent conditions, the table moved!

Mr. Carrington is absolutely positive that, under such conditions, fraud would have been impossible. And he still further emphasizes the matter by also telling us that Eusapia sat nine inches away from the table, but above all the table reared up on the legs furthest from the medium. Just think of it, "the table reared up on its furthest legs!" And we are told after all these things "that certainty had been reached, and that the levitations were true beyond a doubt."

As a matter of fact, neither Mr. Carrington's cones, nor the top board connecting them, nor the various other things which were done, in any wise prevented Eusapia from perpetrating the simplest sort of trickery. Mr. Carrington, with all his care, had left a place wide open, where fraud could have entered in, and there isn't a single word in his report which shows that he suspected such a method or that he guarded against it. All that she had to do was to make a connection between the lower ledge of the table and her waist, and then draw in her back, which would have caused the table to "rear up on its furthest legs." A thin wire would have served the purpose and her black dress would have made

it invisible. Moreover, she could have been "nine inches from the table" and draw in the wire with a movement of her back just as easily as though she had sat close to the table.

Sixteen years ago, according to a report in the Journal of the English Society for Psychical Research, a man attempted to put a screen between Eusapia and the table, and she frothed at the mouth with rage, just as she always does when a good investigator gets too close to her mysteries.

Now I am not claiming that this trick was employed. That is not the point at all; I am endeavoring to show that, in spite of the fact that Mr. Carrington believed that fraud would have been impossible, every avenue of deception had not been closed. I have looked through his book exposing the trickery of pseudo-mediums and fail to find any reference to the wire loop and suction clamp trick exposed by me in THE SUNDAY TIMES of Oct. 17. And I challenge Mr. Carrington to give me the name and date of any publication issued prior to that time, which contains this particular revelation. I also gave a method of lifting a table clear off the floor in my previous article, and will now remind the reader that a variation of the "aerial suspension trick" would also enable Eusapia to completely levitate a table, and the usual steel corsets, or an inner belt with adjustable connector would be all that is necessary.

I have talked with a pretty shrewd man who was at the seance given and he admitted, after I had explained the matter, that the space immediately between her abdomen and the under edge of the table were not guarded very much and sometimes not at all. He also admitted that her hands at times also rested just above this vital place, which would have enabled her to protect herself if any sudden investigation had been made.

To those who believe she possesses some electrical or magnetic power, but are unwilling to go any further in their belief, let me say that neither electricity nor magnetism will explain the production of the alleged spirit hands, and therefore by their own theory of electricity they make her out to be a fraud. If they are not willing to extend their theory far enough to include the strumming of musical instruments and the various other phenomena, such as faces and hands of putty and that sort of thing, they necessarily repudiate all these things. Having thus repudiated a very large part of her performance they do precisely as we are doing—charge her with being a trickster. If three-fourths of her entire performance is trickery, why not conclude that the remaining quarter is trickery, too?

For the benefit of anybody who is willing to believe that part of her performance can be so explained, let me say that if such persons will make tests for electricity and magnetism they will find that the most delicate instrument they can bring to a seance will not detect either one of them. If they think I am mistaken let them try it. If we have got to accept any theory it evidently lies between fraud and spirits. As between a perfectly normal explanation and a miraculous one the normal explanation is not only the safer but the more logical.

Having brought forward these possibilities of fraud it would appear to be incumbent upon the medium to demonstrate that she does not employ these methods. Mr. Carrington tells us that he is doing all he can to prevent the possibility of fraud. But we do not want him to do it. It would be better if he would keep without. If anybody is to attempt precluding fraud it must be done by persons who are neither biased nor pecuniarily interested.